

NATIONAL SECURITY. A NEW APPROACH TO MARITIME TERRORISM IN AFRICA

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Abstract

The operational conceptualization of National Security is often identified as being diffuse and increasingly comprehensive, especially since it is currently related to the geopolitical context and the actors in reference. The conceptual analysis that we present here has as main objective to approach the concept of National Security, making a correlation with the growth of maritime terrorism in the African continent in general, having as a particular focus its incidence in its regions, framed by the debates of international relations. The central hypothesis of the work is that the approach to the phenomenon of maritime terrorism on the African continent should be treated at the level of a joint security regime between African States. In this perspective, in parallel to the conceptual framework, the central role of states in addressing the role of States in territorial security in the face of the growth of terrorist threats on the continent and the identification of the main challenges facing national security in this region of the globe, where the joint security approach among states proved to be fundamental, in order to counter the upward trend of transnational terrorism movements.

Keywords

National Security, Maritime Terrorism, Africa, Oceans.

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Introduction

In the context of International Security Studies, following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the importance given to the topic grew exponentially, particularly in the debates on how to protect the state from external attacks, since it meant a paradigm shift, changing the dynamics of international politics and resulting in a declaration of global fight against terrorism and against all organizations that support terrorist movements.

In the African continent, with the beginning of the 21st century, terrorist movements have emerged as a threat to the security and political stability of African states. In fact, Africa today has been marked by the proliferation of terrorist groups, where the intensification of terrorist movements such as *Boko Haram* and *Al-Shabaab* has affected the security and stability of states in the region, particularly in the West and East African regions. These terrorist groups have in their agenda the destabilization of power structures in these regions, thus promoting the Islamization of these nations as opposed to Western civilization (Omuoha, 2013; Schmid, 2011).

Therefore, the approach presented here aims to deepen the debate on national security issues within the main stakeholders on issues that address the African cause in general, and national security issues in the regions of the continent, in the face of maritime terrorism, thus serving as a further element of analysis on the state of fragility of the borders of African countries, where the lethargic stance of African authorities seems evident. An approach to national security in Africa is not only a socio-political reflection on the facts, but also a vision of human development and empowerment of African nations, thus listing the main challenges in the face of maritime terrorism and pointing out some lines of action in view of the new paradigm.

In fact, the analysis will not focus on terrorist movements, but on the dynamics of national security, especially in the Gulf of Guinea, in order to confront these threats, and it will be important to understand: what should be the role of African states as guarantors of security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity in the face of growing waves of maritime terrorism? The article makes a systematic analysis, based on a bibliographic review, adopting a qualitative approach, through deductive reasoning, starting from a central

¹ Article translated by Cláudia Tavares.



objective, based on the starting question; and is structured in three points, the first being a conceptual approach, followed by an analysis of the state of continental insecurity, ending with a description of the role of African states in dealing with the phenomenon.

Conceptual approach

In order to address the concept and problem of National Security, it is important to mention the scope of International Security Studies, in the English acronym ISS (*International Security Studies*), Therefore, its interdisciplinarity covers the field of study of other sciences, namely that of International Relations, since the boundaries between one and the other sciences are difficult to draw (Buzan and Hansen, 2009: 16). However, given the goals recommended in this scientific article, the conceptualization of the themes brought here will be within the scope of International Relations, while respecting the theories of the main Schools within the framework of Security Studies, among which the *International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO)*; and the *Copenhagen School of Security Studies, based on the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute*.

The term security in its etymological origin derives from the Latin "*securus*", which means without fear, and refers us to the absence of risk, predictability, certainty regarding the future. As Philippe David says, the concept of Security has been the object of a profound conceptual renewal, considering the capacity of the State to contain the threats to its sovereignty, due to the evolution of the classic levels of analysis of national, regional, international and cooperative security, to the common, global and human security level (2001: 29-30). The concept has thus lost its almost exclusively public, national, and military dimension (Guedes and Elias, 2010: 28). Thus, according to the concept defended by Admiral António Sacchetti, the concept of National Security consists of:

"the situation that guarantees the unity, sovereignty and independence of the Nation; the integrity of the territory and the security of persons and goods; the unity of the State and the normal development of its tasks; the freedom of political action of the organs of sovereignty and the regular functioning of the democratic institutions contained in the constitutional framework" (2008:19).

It is thus understood that National Security translates the ideological complex, which aims to guarantee and protect the integrity and sovereignty of States and all the material and abstract values that represent the vital objectives of States. Therefore, the concept of National Security currently defended, in the scope of International Relations, refers to collective security, understood as an essential pillar for the maintenance of the structure of modern states and of the present World Order, encompassing the spectrum of internal security of the countries, or of a regional or continental space, in which the area of



interests of those states that are part of it is centered, thus giving rise to the notion of a security regime within international organizations².

Furthermore, in the current international order, the concept of National Security has evolved to a more comprehensive vision as a result of the complexity, instability, and insecurity of the international conjuncture, considering a greater space for cooperation and dialogue at internal and external levels.

It is thus understood that the "feeling of security" presupposes not only the concept of Defense *vis-à-vis* the outside world, but also a political-strategic vision, in which one is less insecure when the goals set that guarantee the desirable security are achieved and not only when ensuring the very survival of the Nation (Ginga, 2014).

Thus, as in other contexts, there is a greater scope for the pillars of National Security in African States, thanks also to the greater "demilitarization" of the elements that are at the base of this factor, thus overcoming the military security dimension by encompassing the economic, social, cultural spheres, among other essential fields, as to the implementation of the feeling of security of any State³ (Moreira, 2002). As Guedes and Elias argue, the concept of "Security" has become a broadband concept, as it now encompasses "the action and commitment of public institutions but also private, local society and civil society in a broader sense - as well as international institutions and organizations, be they from neighboring states, intergovernmental or other, supranational entities" (Guedes and Elias, 2010: 28).

In turn, and with regard to the resurgence of the phenomenon of terrorism in the post-Cold War order, materialized by the attacks on the twin towers, it will also be important to perceive and approach its concept, having as its matrix its typology, according to the violent act, the objectives, the actor who performs, and its motivation⁴. Terrorism is an ancient phenomenon, rooted in history and geography, which has changed over the years, varying organizational structure, *modus operandi*, area of activity, target goal, and prevailing ideology (Lousada, 2007: 20).

Therefore, to conceptualize the phenomenon and characterize its historical path to the present day, would be the most correct way to approach the subject, however, and by rationalizing space, the approach in this article will be limited to modern transnational terrorism or neoterrorism, more specifically to its maritime aspect. Thus, it is understood that the contemporary definition of the term terrorism is not only related to history, but also to the culture, policies of the nations, and the geopolitical context in question, which

² As a result of increasing globalization, the figure of the national state is losing importance, which forces us to review the systems of governance of contemporary societies, in which the public participation of citizens and the emergence of new international institutions acquire greater weight, and in the specific case of security, lead us to two essential dimensions, that of human security and collective security (Lourenço and Machado, 2013: 94).

³ Moreover, the tendency of states to integrate into the "big spaces" that have tried to counter the inadequacies of the old sovereign model, has implied the transformation of the perspectives of territorial security and the greater recognition of cross-border solidarities, in a context of globalization.

⁴ Over the centuries terrorism has experienced different variants as an instrument of non-state actors, and it was highlighted in the 18th-19th century because of anarchists. More recently, in the 21st century, the violent demonstrations led by al-Qaeda, responsible for the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States, and March 11, 2004, in Madrid, have resulted in a new version of terrorism emerging within societies, more focused on internationalizing its effects, that is, modern terrorism (Galito, 2013).



leads to various conceptions of terrorism, while for some the correct definition of the phenomenon is terrorism, for others it is a fight for freedom, but regardless of the geopolitical context, there is no exclusive definition of terrorism⁵.

It will be important to present an academic conceptual view of the phenomenon, so according to Tore Bjorgo (2005: 2), terrorism consists of a "set of combating methods rather than an identifiable ideology or movement, and involves the premeditated use of violence against noncombatants in order to achieve a psychological effect of fear on others, the immediate targets...", to the extent that its understanding is centered on the nature of the act and not on its motivation. The United Nations, in its concept presented in February 2002, argues that terrorism "includes any action that causes harm to persons or property when the purpose of the action, by its nature or context, is to intimidate the population or to pressure a government or international organization to refrain from drafting a certain act". In their view, the United Nations does not address the nature of the terrorist actor, that is, whether he is limited to organized crime groups or whether states can be included as fostering or financing elements of the phenomenon.

In fact, although the concept of maritime terrorism is often confused with the notion of maritime piracy, due to its nature, the difference lies mainly in the motivations and objectives of both activities, i.e., piracy is generally motivated by private interests not underlying political-ideological objectives, while maritime terrorism is perceived as one of several forms of armed rebellion for some higher cause, usually of an ideological political nature, aiming at provocation - repression - destabilization; as Bjorn Moller defends, when he states that "... terrorism is a strategy or tactics which an actor may choose, either fully and permanently or, much more frequently, partly and periodically, either alternating between or combining non-violent political struggle with guerrilla war and/or terrorism" (2009: 23).

However, regarding the concrete definition of Maritime Terrorism, it is important to make a cross between the definitions presented here and the definition of Maritime Piracy, defended by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which defines as:

"(...) any unlawful act of violence or of detention or pillage committed for private purposes by the crew or passengers of a ship or a private aircraft and directed against: a ship or an aircraft on the high seas or persons or property on board thereof (...), persons or property in a place not subject to the jurisdiction of any State; and any act of voluntary participation in the use of a ship or aircraft, when the perpetrator is aware of facts which give that ship or aircraft the status of a pirate ship or aircraft" (CNUDM, 1982: Art. 101º).

With this and after a brief conceptual analysis, it is considered consensual that maritime terrorism is characterized as an illegal act of a violent nature, against individuals,

⁵ According to Pierre-Marie Dupuy's research, there are at least 109 possible definitions of terrorism (*apud Galito, 2013: 3*).



structures, organizations or states, at or from the sea, with political-ideological motivations, aiming to achieve gains for a certain group of individuals or international organizations. The existence of an organization or "network structure", supported by a complex web of political, religious, economic, and financial instruments, underlies (Moller, 2009).

Maritime piracy emerges as an instrument or component of the global spectrum of maritime terrorism⁶, and the latter covers all illicit activities in the maritime space, which are politically-ideologically motivated. Maritime terrorism comprises various manifestations, including acts of piracy⁷, the acts of deposition of substances and illegal spillage into the oceans⁸, acts of violence against ships at sea or on land, acts of illegal extraction and plundering of marine resources, acts of using a ship as a weapon, acts of using the sea as a logistical means to support terrorist activities, and the use of the sea as a platform for launching attacks against states, among other manifestations (Cottim, 2008: 131). Therefore, the approach presented here will focus on maritime terrorism, in its different variants.

The context of insecurity on the continent

The geopolitical situation of the African continent is very marked by problems and threats to its security, since these are older than its constitution as a continent formed by sovereign states, since it has always faced obstacles, among them the conquests and occupations promoted by various peoples over several centuries, later by the attempts at domination perpetrated by the great powers during the 19th century, having given place to the Berlin Conference, and currently for the third phase of the "Scramble for Africa", motivated by geopolitical and geostrategic reasons, making the major international powers more attentive to the dynamics of this continent; where mineral and energy resources occupy a central place in this new interaction.

⁶ Maritime terrorism is not easily dissociated from piracy, particularly because of its complex character and at the same time transversal to all other manifestations of organized crime at sea. There are not many statistical reports on international 'maritime terrorism', not only because it is usually associated with piracy, but also because the targets of maritime terrorism are not always targets at sea, but also on land, one of the factors that distinguishes terrorism from piracy, where targets are always maritime (Moller, 2009).

⁷ Among the various manifestations of maritime terrorism throughout history, the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in October 1985 in the Mediterranean by a group of terrorists from the Palestine Liberation Front, which culminated with the American citizen Leon Klinghoffer, and later resulted in the implementation of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, stands out (SUA 1988). Later, after the events of September 11, 2001, the 22nd session of the Assembly of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in November 2001 agreed to develop new measures regarding the protection of ships and port facilities, resulting in the adoption, on December 12, 2002, of the International Code for the Protection of Ships and Port Facilities (*International Ship and Port Facility Security Code* – ISPS Code). Still in 2002, the IMO implemented two other systems with a view to enhancing safety on board ships and maritime infrastructure, namely: the Automatic Identification System (*Automatic Identification System* – AIS); and the Ship Secure Alert System (*Ship Secure Alert System* – SSAS) (Simioni, 2011).

⁸ In the post 9/11 era, the attack on Limburg, a French-flagged tanker in the service of Petronas, on 6 October 2002 by means of a small boat loaded with explosives off Yemen, which caused the death of a crew member and the spillage of 90,000 barrels of crude oil into the sea, highlights the potential damage terrorism can have to the marine environment (Cottim, 2008).



The history of the continent, particularly the sub-Saharan region, is thus marked by three critical vectors, co-responsible for the low levels of development and prolonged periods of political, security and socio-economic crises. The former is associated with its "potential in natural resources" that is, its natural riches that for several centuries have aroused the interest of other states; the second is related to the "internal fragilities" of states, which have resulted in successive intra-state conflicts and contributed to sociopolitical instability in these countries; and the third is linked to the marked "democratic deficit" and the breakdown of most African states, which has favored the spread of widespread violence across the continent (Ginga, 2014: 161).

As a result, the last decades have seen an evolutionary change in the typology of regional conflicts in Africa, which have moved from within states to the oceans, affecting local development, regional and continental dynamics, and weakening the socio-political structures in these states. This new contemporary regional context has led African States and Regional Organizations (ORA), as well as the international community, to attach greater importance to the security factor at sea, since without peace, stability and tranquility in these spaces, there are no conditions for States to develop⁹.

In this context, more recently, at the beginning of the 21st century, terrorist movements associated with other forms of organized crime such as piracy and trafficking in drugs, goods, arms and human beings have contributed to the academic debate on the geopolitical dimensions of security on the continent, especially in its maritime dimension, which has been the "Achilles' heel" for the states in this region, where the actions of the local authorities have not been sufficient to put an end to these attacks on sovereignty and the rule of law on the continent in isolation. This is the reality of a continent that has been weakened by insecurity, with consequences at the level of socio-economic development, and where states with weak structures further weaken the continental condition¹⁰.

In fact, new actors on the international and continental scene have competed with states, often diminishing their autonomy, making their dynamics more complex in international relations, and sometimes jeopardizing local, regional and even continental stability. The binomial "security-insecurity" in the continent has been represented by the set of vulnerabilities - internal and external - that threaten or have the potential to reduce or weaken government structures, bodies or institutions, and political regimes.

According to the data presented annually by Global Firepower, it is perceived that in parallel to this threat, African states face a deeper problem, translated by the lack of resources to face the context of insecurity in general, and maritime terrorism in particular¹¹. The latest reports of the *International Institute for Strategic Studies* (IISS)

⁹ Attacks on the oil sector along the west coast of the African continent cost billions of dollars in lost revenue, destabilize global energy prices and lead to environmental disasters. According to the United Nations assessment mission report on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea in 2011, these crimes caused economic losses of up to USD 2 billion annually, mainly hitting local economies (Gorce and Salvy, 2012: 62, free translation).

¹⁰ Illegal activities have multiplied in African maritime spaces, fundamentally because many states do not have the capacity to continuously exercise the authority of the state at sea, and those that are capable have their action limited under UNCLOS (Gorce and Salvy, 2012: 59).

¹¹ The Ranking presented by the Global Fire Power platform is based on the military potential of each state, in terms of land, sea and air military means. Thus, in most of the African coastal states, great vulnerabilities are observed at the naval component level, specifically in terms of the means necessary for the permanent



– *The Military Balance* - describe a panorama of disinvestment in the Navies of War¹², in some African states, which in the medium and long term may determine a lesser presence of the Authority of States at sea. In fact, “*despite increasing international commitment, and amid persistent military operations, the security situation in west Africa and the sahel region continues to deteriorate*” (IISS, 2020: 444).

As previously underlined, the present approach is mainly about the last wave¹³ of maritime terrorism on the continent, as terrorist movements on the continent have emerged over time with different motivations, which have caused the phenomenon in Africa to undergo several transformations. As a result, in recent years the continent has been greatly affected by organized maritime terrorism, especially with the defeat of the Islamic state in Iraq and Syria, terrorist movements have expanded their extremist cause throughout the regions of the continent, particularly in the Sahel, Gulf of Guinea and Gulf of Aden. Maritime terrorism has also been a point of intersection of local politics and violence, and this is where the problem lies, since its effects are structural and go beyond national borders and constitutions (Schmid, 2011).

In this context, the progressive increase in kidnappings, attacks, arrests, and attacks by terrorist groups on the continent has aggravated concerns that organized crime movements are gaining momentum, as terrorism targets on the continent now vary depending on the objectives of the movement. Several insurgent groups have made extensive use of the sea, as an extension of their affirmation on the continent, and a greater connection between organized crime networks on land and at sea can be observed (Moller, 2009: 27).

Among the terrorist movements on the continent, it will be important to focus on some groups that have made use of 'liquid spaces' for their progression and cell-linkage: *Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta* (MEDN), with strong performance in the Niger Delta region; *Boko Haram*, which operates mainly in West and North Africa; *Al Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb* (AQIM), which operates in the region of Mali, Mauritania and North Africa; *Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa* (MUJAO), a military and terrorist organization, of Salafite jihadist ideology that separated from AQMI, and one of its cells gave rise to the Islamic State in the Great Sahara; the *Janjaweed* in the region of Sudan; the *Ansar al-Sharia* ("Sharia advocates"), Yemeni-based Islamic militia, advocates strict implementation of Islamic law in several African states in the northern and western regions of Africa, particularly in the *Maghreb* and *Sahel*, in countries such as Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Mali; *Hizbul Shabab or Al-Shabab* (Youth), whose

exercise of State Authority at sea, in its various dimensions (sub-surface, surface and air). See. <Consulted on 15/09/2020> <https://www.globalfirepower.com/navy-ships.asp>

¹² According to the Military Balance 2020, in 2019, defense spending by sub-Saharan African states represented only 1% (USD 17.1 billion) of global spending, with South Africa spending the most (USD 3.54 billion).

¹³ In the context of the history of terrorism, its evolution is commonly presented in stages or "waves of terrorism", the first being the Wave of Anarchists, also symbolized by the anarchist movements that have emerged since the French Revolution, led by Robespierre; the second was the Anti-colonialist Wave, represented by the liberation and independence movements of the 1st Pan-African Conference of 1919; the third was the New Left Wave, which mixed nationalism with terrorist radicalism; the fourth is the Religious Wave, marked by religious fundamentalism, which has been gaining more and more political outlines (Schmid, 2011).



bases and origins are in Somalia, and who operate in East Africa, more specifically in the 'Horn of Africa' region; among other terrorist movements (Goïta, 2011; Thurston, 2017).

In recent years, these groups, taking advantage of the fragile structures of African states and using funds originated by organized crime networks, have expanded their cells on the continent. Associated with this, the discontent of the populations towards the local authorities has favored the recruiting of combatants for their cells, such as the *Ansaru* faction, within the African communities. (Stohl, Burchill and Englund, 2017).

In this case, the western region, the internal discontent in the states of the region regarding the mismanagement of resources, has caused radical movements to emerge, against the 'backdrop' of constituting an alternative to the power elites in these spaces, whereas it is important to underline the concrete cases of the *MEDN* and the *Boko Haram*, which in the name of the self-determination of peoples, aim at establishing Muslim caliphs in these areas, spreading terror and Islamic radicalism (Thurston, 2017). The case of the Bonga oil rig, attacked 60 nautical miles from the Niger Delta in June 2008 by the MEND, forcing production to stop, reflects the insurgency of these movements; the case of the disappearance of the Kerala Tanker¹⁴, of Liberian flag, at the service of the National Fuel Society of Angola, in January 2014; or also the case of the Norwegian flagged Grand Ship MV Bonita, approached by pirates on November 2, 2019 (Ploch, 2013; IMB, 2019).

In fact, unlike a few years ago, when the concerns of international authorities rested on the Gulf of Aden, today the challenges of eradicating terrorist groups are found in the Gulf of Guinea (GG). In the year 2019, according to the International Maritime Bureau, about 162 incidents of maritime piracy and armed robbery against ships were reported worldwide, 40% of which were recorded on the African continent (IMB, 2019: 5).

In fact, in the Gulf of Guinea, unlike the Gulf of Aden, where they opted for cargo and people rescue premiums, the terrorist movements have changed their *modus operandis*, to the extent that they have favored the capture of cargo and maritime means for their commercialization on the 'black market', which has also favored the growth of criminal cells (Kamal-Deen, 2015). Most of the vessels approached by these militias are retained for the time necessary to carry out the transfer of cargo, which is then routed and traded on the 'black market'; the other part of the vessels, namely sailboats and speedboats, are captured, remaining at the service of these organized crime cells.

As a result of weak state authority at sea, maritime terrorism has grown in 'continental waters', particularly in the western region of the continent. In this particular and according to Bjorn Moller (2009: 28), "...there are claims that Al Qaeda has assembled its own small fleet in the form of 'ghost ships,' i.e. hijacked ships which have been re-flagged and re-registered... it also seems that Al Qaeda has tried to develop what one might call a strategy for maritime terrorism...", as a result, the means used by organized crime are evolving, with anchorages and oilfields being the preferred stages of terrorists (Chatam House, 2013).

¹⁴ See. <Consulted on 12/03/2018> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-angola-piracy/pirates-hijacked-tanker-off-angola-stole-cargo-owners-idUSBREA0P0QY20140126>.



These developments, in the techniques and modes of action of the terrorist movements, have made it possible for organized crime networks, at certain latitudes, to plead with local authorities, leading several times to negotiations between government authorities and errant groups, or even to political-ideological links between organized crime groups and political elites (IE&P, 2017).

The UNODC annual report on transnational organized crime on the west coast of Africa describes the weak capacity of some states to exercise state authority in maritime and coastal spaces, particularly due to insufficient economic, material, and human resources as the catalyst for the proliferation of criminal activities, as maritime terrorism has emerged in recent years as the channel for strengthening these terrorist movements (UNODC, 2018).

Finally, the profound changes that have occurred in the political order and economy of African states in recent years, the failures, the permanence of borders and the lack of expectations of African nations, justify the shaping of a new doctrine of regional security, that is capable of empowering States, in order to assume their dimension as the cradle continent and affirm the local project of a continent in transformation, oriented towards the sustainable development of its nations.

The role of the State and future challenges in the face of Maritime Terrorism

At a time when the new threats, within the framework of the *International Security Studies*, do not fit the conventional parameters of "who" threatens, "how," "when," and "where," the effectiveness of military security has been questioned because the arms race is no longer sufficient to contain transnational terrorism, the notion that 'security cooperation' emerges as the best way to contain it; not only because of the greater scope of the actors it presupposes, but also because of the deeper ties of friendship and cooperation, which weigh heavily on international relations (Singh, 2019; Ginga, 2014).

Surely, "*maritime boundary management is always a collaborative process between a country and its neighbors, thus cannot be done unilaterally, and is always better to be done jointly at the regional level...*" (Okonkwo, 2017: 66), there is therefore a need to rediscover and develop more partnerships in the field of regional security, particularly in the fight against maritime terrorism, leading to a rescaling of national infrastructures and national borders, and aiming to provide adequate responses to the nature of these new challenges and risks to the integrity and sovereignty of the State.

Human security, as the central pillar of national security, must justify the intervention of African states in favor of their internal weaknesses, otherwise the threats and challenges that beset transnational crime within the borders of these regions will proliferate, especially due to the inability to control part of their territories on their own.

In this regard, on the African continent, the ORA associated with the African Union (AU) appear as the main actors at the continental level, in order to respond to some of the various problems faced by states, including maritime insecurity and terrorism, among others, which can most easily be resolved together.



United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 1368 and 1373, in accordance with Article 39 of the United Nations Charter, declare that terrorism, in its various forms, is a global threat and should therefore be combated at all levels by all means (Cottim, 2008: 141). Thus, in parallel with non-African action to ensure peace and stability on the continent, African leaders are already aware of the need to create an increasingly less conflictive environment within their states in order to make sustainable development possible in these regions; which led to the operationalization of the so-called "African Peace and Security Architecture" (APSA) as a platform for the institutionalization of the continental security regime.

In fact, measures to combat maritime terrorism cut across the fight against piracy in the region, and vice versa, particularly as the latter is a component of the former, so the UNSC, through Resolutions 2018 (2011) and 2039 (2012), urged ONP states to take appropriate measures at the national and regional levels, with the support of the international community, to implement national maritime safety strategies.

As a result, on June 24 and 25, 2013, in Yaoundé, Cameroon, the summit of Heads of State and Government on Maritime Protection and Security in the Gulf of Guinea was held, culminating in the creation and subsequent implementation of the well-known Yaoundé Code of Conduct of 2013. This code appears, within the framework of the maritime component of APSA, as a continuation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and a complement to the "Jeddah Amendment" to the 2017 Djibouti Code of Conduct (Singh, 2019).

In addition, for the Gulf of Guinea, and in compliance with its Resolution A.1069 (28) of February 5, 2014, the IMO has developed and implemented a program of "*TableTop Exercises*", aimed at promoting an intergovernmental approach to maritime protection and law enforcement in West and Central Africa.

In parallel, the Lomé Charter, adopted at the AU Special Summit on Maritime Protection and Security and Development in Africa on 15 October 2016 in Lomé, also emerges as an essential tool with regard to maritime insecurity issues and the fight against maritime terrorism, reinforcing the need to implement the *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU), signed between the IMO and OMAOC (West and Central Africa Maritime Organization) in July 2008, in the framework of the *Global Maritime Security Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme*; aiming to establish a sub-regional Integrated Coast Guard Network in West and Central Africa.

To these instruments, the *Interregional Coordination Center* (ICC) was associated, established through a MoU signed between the bodies of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) on 5 June 2014, on maritime safety in West and Central Africa, which establishes the creation of the *Interregional Coordination Center* (ICC) (ICC, 2014). Within this regional maritime safety network, states are grouped into five maritime zones, each supported by regional coordination centers, which include CREMAO (West African Regional Maritime Safety Center) and CRESMAC (Central African Regional Maritime Safety Center).



In general, it is considered that an anti-terrorist concept should be born within African states, based on a set of measures of a defensive nature, which allow a timely alert on threats, giving priority to international cooperation, at the level of the information system, in financial and political assistance to each other among those involved in the fight against terrorism, in order to avoid the further strengthening of crime and terror organizations, and as a last ratio and in a harmonized manner, should declare a preventive war at the continental level (Lousada, 2007: 42).

Conclusion

After highlighting the main lines of thought drawn throughout this scientific essay on National Security in the current context of maritime terrorism on the African continent, it is considered that the sustainable development of these regions is dependent on the adoption of a continental cooperative maritime security project, namely because these threats have a strong impact on the economy of these states.

Indeed, it follows that the fight against maritime terrorism must be conducted in a continuous and harmonized manner, based on a strategy of mutual assistance of African states, in order to overcome any type of threat that might hinder local and continental development. This is because the methods of terrorist movements on the continent have evolved due to the very global and local dynamics of organized crime networks.

The current continental situation of territorial insecurity requires states to guarantee national security and the defense of their singular and collective interests within the international community, far beyond the traditional concept of security limited to territorial sources, so security aspects should be a priority for investment by all states, because of their close relationship with factors of economic development and national stability, which and in this case the Gulf of Guinea region should be at the forefront of the major objectives of regional cooperation.

In short, African authorities should also collect data and information to enable research into the involvement of terrorist movements in the spread of other forms of organized crime on the continent, mobilizing cooperation between the different police forces in the most affected regions of the continent, at the risk of seeing the multiplication of these organized crime networks across the continent.

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